

Office Action paragraph 2. The Examiner is of the view that published international application 95-20200 to Ruat ("Ruat") supposedly anticipates claims 1, 3-4, 7, 9-10, 12-13, 16, 18-20, 22-23, 26 and 28-31.

Claim 1, with portions labeled with letters for convenient reference, is:

1. A method for use with mail pieces and with a purchaser having an identity, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) requiring, as a precondition of purchasing at least one postal indicium, receipt of first information indicative of the purchaser's identity,

(b) deriving second information functionally from said first information;

(c) printing said second information upon the at least one postal indicium;

(d) receiving an addressed mail piece with the at least one postal indicium into the mail;
and

(e) delivering the addressed mail piece.

A first difficulty with the rejection is that the claim, a method claim, centers on a "purchaser" and a "purchase." Applicant's attorney, despite diligent review of the English portions of Ruat, is unable to find a "purchaser" or a "purchase." The Abstract talks about a "sender" but as is well known, the "sender" of a mail piece is often not the same person as the "purchaser" of a postal indicium. One person may purchase a stamp while a different person may use the stamp to mail a mail piece. The Examiner is requested to point to the page and line number in Ruat where the "purchaser" is found, and the page and line number where the "purchase" is found, or to withdraw the rejection.

A second difficulty with the rejection is that the claim is limited in that there is a requirement, as a precondition of purchasing at least one postal indicium, that information indicative of the purchaser's identity be received. The reference, in fact, refers to "automatic invoicing" which apparently would take place after the mail piece is mailed, which puts into question whether the time sequence set forth in this limitation (the "precondition") could possibly be found in the reference. Applicant's attorney, despite diligent review of the English portions of Ruat, is unable

to find such a limitation. The Examiner is requested to point to the page and line number in Ruat where this limitation is found, or to withdraw the rejection.

Similar problems present themselves regarding the rejection as to limitations (b) and (c). While the abstract of Ruat hints at printing various information on a mail piece, there is no indication (in the English portion thereof) of printing information indicative of the purchaser upon the indicium.

For limitation (d) to be found in the reference, the reference would need to show that a mail piece bearing information indicative of the identity of the purchaser (rather than, for example, the identity of the return address as suggested in the abstract of Ruat) was received into the mail.

The Examiner's rejection over Ruat of claims 3-4, 7 and 9, all of which depend from claim 1, should be withdrawn for the same reasons as discussed above in connection with claim 1.

Claim 10 is:

A method for use with purchased postal indicia, with mail pieces and with a purchaser having an identity, the method comprising the steps of:

requiring, as a precondition of receiving at least one addressed mail piece with a postal indicium into the mail, that the postal indicium bear information indicative of the identity of the purchaser;

receiving the at least one addressed mail piece with the postal indicium into the mail; and
delivering the at least one addressed mail piece.

A first difficulty with the rejection is that the claim, a method claim, centers on a "purchaser" and a "purchase." Applicant's attorney, despite diligent review of the English portions of Ruat, is unable to find a "purchaser" or a "purchase." The Abstract talks about a "sender" but as is well known, the "sender" of a mail piece is often not the same person as the "purchaser" of a postal indicium. One person may purchase a stamp while a different person may use the stamp to mail a mail piece. The Examiner is requested to point to the page and line number in Ruat where the

"purchaser" is found, and the page and line number where the "purchase" is found, or to withdraw the rejection.

A second difficulty with the rejection is that the claim is limited in that there is a requirement, as a precondition of purchasing at least one postal indicium, that information indicative of the purchaser's identity be borne in the postal indicium. The reference, in fact, refers to "automatic invoicing" which apparently would take place after the mail piece is mailed, which puts into question whether the time sequence set forth in this limitation (the "precondition") could possibly be found in the reference. Applicant's attorney, despite diligent review of the English portions of Ruat, is unable to find such a limitation. The Examiner is requested to point to the page and line number in Ruat where this limitation is found, or to withdraw the rejection.

For the "receiving" limitation to be found in the reference, the reference would need to show that a mail piece bearing information indicative of the identity of the purchaser (rather than, for example, the identity of the return address as suggested in the abstract of Ruat) was received into the mail.

For all these reasons it is requested that the rejection of claim 10 over Ruat be withdrawn. Likewise it is requested that the rejection over Ruat of claims 12-13, 16, and 18-19, all of which depend from claim 10, be withdrawn.

Claim 20 is:

A method for use with purchased postal indicia, with mail pieces and with a purchaser having an identity, the method comprising the steps of:

requiring, as a precondition of delivering at least one addressed mail piece with a postal indicium, that the postal indicium bear information indicative of the identity of the purchaser;

receiving the at least one addressed mail piece with the postal indicium into the mail; and
delivering the at least one addressed mail piece.

A first difficulty with the rejection is that the claim, a method claim, centers on a "purchaser" and a "purchase." Applicant's attorney, despite diligent review of the English portions of Ruat, is unable to find a "purchaser" or a "purchase." The Abstract talks about a "sender" but as is well known, the "sender" of a mail piece is often not the same person as the "purchaser" of a postal indicium. One person may purchase a stamp while a different person may use the stamp to mail a mail piece. The Examiner is requested to point to the page and line number in Ruat where the "purchaser" is found, and the page and line number where the "purchase" is found, or to withdraw the rejection.

A second difficulty with the rejection is that the claim is limited in that there is a requirement, as a precondition of delivering a mail piece, that information indicative of the purchaser's identity be borne in the postal indicium. The reference, in fact, refers to "automatic invoicing" which apparently would take place after the mail piece is mailed, which puts into question whether the time sequence set forth in this limitation (the "precondition") could possibly be found in the reference. Applicant's attorney, despite diligent review of the English portions of Ruat, is unable to find such a limitation. The Examiner is requested to point to the page and line number in Ruat where this limitation is found, or to withdraw the rejection.

For the "receiving" limitation to be found in the reference, the reference would need to show that a mail piece bearing information indicative of the identity of the purchaser (rather than, for example, the identity of the return address as suggested in the abstract of Ruat) was received into the mail.

For all these reasons it is requested that the rejection of claim 20 over Ruat be withdrawn. Likewise it is requested that the rejection over Ruat of claims 22-23, 26 and 28-29, all of which depend from claim 20, be withdrawn.

Claim 30 is:

A method for use with mail pieces and with a recipient possessing a list of expected senders, and with a sender having an identity, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a delivered mail piece bearing a postal indicium, the postal indicium bearing information indicative of the identity of the sender;

reading the information indicative of the identity of the sender; and

determining whether the sender whose identity is indicated by the information is on the list of expected senders.

Applicant's attorney is unable to find any hint or suggestion in the English-language portions of Ruat of a "recipient possessing a list of expected senders." The Examiner is requested to indicate the page and line at which this limitation may be found in Ruat, or to withdraw the rejection.

Applicant's attorney is unable to find any hint or suggestion in the English-language portions of Ruat of a step of "determining whether the sender whose identity is indicated by the information is on the list of expected senders." The Examiner is requested to indicate the page and line at which this limitation may be found in Ruat, or to withdraw the rejection.

It is requested that the rejection of Claim 31, which depends from claim 30, be withdrawn for the same reasons. It is also noted that claim 31 is limited in that the information indicative of the identity of the sender that is borne in the postal indicium is cryptographically signed, and is further limited in that the reading step further comprises checking the cryptographic signature. The Examiner is requested to indicate the page and line at which this limitation may be found in Ruat, or to withdraw the rejection.

Office action paragraph 3. The Examiner is of the view that US Pat. No. 5,953,426 to Windel et al. ("Windel") supposedly anticipates claims 1, 3-4, 6-10, 12-13, 15-20, 22-23, and 25-32.

It is noted that every one of these claims is limited in that "the identity of a purchaser" plays role. The only place in Windel at which the undersigned is able to find the word "identity" is at claim 1, and there it is used in the sense of being identical:

acknowledging validity of said indicium given identity of the computed MAC and the MAC obtained from the indicium.

The Examiner is requested to indicate the page and line where the identity of a purchaser is discussed, or to withdraw the rejection of claims 1, 3-4, 6-10, 12-13, 15-20, 22-23, and 25-32 over Windel.

The undersigned is unable to find even any mention of a "purchaser" or a "purchase" anywhere in the reference. For this additional reason the Examiner is requested to indicate the page and line where a purchaser or purchase is discussed, or to withdraw the rejection of claims 1, 3-4, 6-10, 12-13, 15-20, 22-23, and 25-32 over Windel.

It is noted that every one of these claims is limited in that a "precondition" is imposed before some later step is performed, such as the step of allowing purchase or receiving a mail piece into a mail stream. The undersigned is unable to find any mention of such a precondition anywhere in the reference. For this additional reason the Examiner is requested to indicate the page and line where this limitation is discussed, or to withdraw the rejection of claims 1, 3-4, 6-10, 12-13, 15-20, 22-23, and 25-32 over Windel.

Office action paragraph 5. The Examiner is of the view that a combination of Ruat and US Pat. No. 5,923,406 to Brasington et al. ("Brasington") supposedly renders obvious claims 2, 11, 21 and 33-36. As admitted by the Examiner, the sole significance of Brasington in these rejections is to show that a postal indicium can be an adhesive stamp. Otherwise the Examiner relies upon Ruat for these seven rejections.

It is noted that Brasington was cited by applicant in paragraph 5 of the specification.

As for claim 2 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in connection with Ruat and claim 1.

As for claim 11 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in connection with Ruat and claim 10.

As for claim 21 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in

connection with Ruat and claim 20.

Claim 33 is:

An adhesive postal indicium comprising information indicative of a postage amount printed by a first process;

information indicative of a country printed by the first process; and

cryptographically signed information indicative of an identity of a purchaser of the adhesive postal indicium;

the cryptographically signed information printed by a different process than the first process.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to provide the page and line at which the following limitations can be found:

- a. the postage amount and country information are printed by the same process;
- b. information indicative of the identity of a purchaser is printed by a different process;
- c. the information indicative of the identity of the purchaser is cryptographically signed.

Failing this, the Examiner is requested to withdraw the rejection of claim 33 over these references. Claim 34 contains the same limitations and thus the rejection should be withdrawn for the same reasons.

Claim 34 is further limited in that a plurality of indicia are involved and a single purchaser has purchased them. The Examiner is respectfully requested to provide the page and line at which this limitation is found, or to withdraw the rejection.

Claim 35 is:

Printing apparatus comprising:

a plurality of adhesive postal indicia, each postal indicium comprising information indicative of a postage amount and information indicative of a country, each postal indicium free of any cryptographically signed information indicative of an identity of a purchaser of the postal indicia; and

a printer adapted to print upon the plurality of adhesive postal indicia cryptographically signed information indicative of an identity of a purchaser of the adhesive postal indicia.

This claim is limited in that a "purchaser" is involved. For the reasons stated above in connection with claim 1 and Office Action paragraph 2, it is requested the rejection be withdrawn.

The claim has the following limitations:

a. prior to printing by the claimed printer, the plurality of adhesive postal indicia are all free of any cryptographically signed information indicative of an identity of a purchaser of the postal indicia

b. the claimed printer prints cryptographically signed information indicative of an identity of a purchaser of the adhesive postal indicia upon the adhesive postal indicia.

The Examiner is invited to provide the page and line number where these limitations may be found, and failing this, the Examiner is requested to withdraw the rejection of claim 35 over these references.

Claim 36 has these limitations as well, so reconsideration is requested for the same reasons.

Office action paragraph 6. The Examiner is of the view that a combination of Windel and Brasington renders claims 2, 11, 21 and 33-36 obvious. As admitted by the Examiner, the sole significance of Brasington in these rejections is to show that a postal indicium can be an adhesive stamp. Otherwise the Examiner relies upon Windel for these seven rejections.

It is again noted that Brasington was cited by applicant in paragraph 5 of the specification.

As for claim 2 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in

connection with Windel and claim 1.

As for claim 11 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in connection with Windel and claim 10.

As for claim 21 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in connection with Windel and claim 20.

Claim 33 is:

An adhesive postal indicium comprising information indicative of a postage amount printed by a first process;

information indicative of a country printed by the first process; and

cryptographically signed information indicative of an identity of a purchaser of the adhesive postal indicium;

the cryptographically signed information printed by a different process than the first process.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to provide the page and line at which the following limitations can be found:

- a. the postage amount and country information are printed by the same process;
- b. information indicative of the identity of a purchaser is printed by a different process;
- c. the information indicative of the identity of the purchaser is cryptographically signed.

Failing this, the Examiner is requested to withdraw the rejection of claim 33 over these references. Claim 34 contains the same limitations and thus the rejection should be withdrawn for the same reasons.

Claim 34 is further limited in that a plurality of indicia are involved and a single purchaser has purchased them. The Examiner is respectfully requested to provide the page and line at which this limitation is found, or to withdraw the rejection.

Claim 35 is:

Printing apparatus comprising:

a plurality of adhesive postal indicia, each postal indicium comprising information indicative of a postage amount and information indicative of a country, each postal indicium free of any cryptographically signed information indicative of an identity of a purchaser of the postal indicia; and

a printer adapted to print upon the plurality of adhesive postal indicia cryptographically signed information indicative of an identity of a purchaser of the adhesive postal indicia.

This claim is limited in that a "purchaser" is involved. For the reasons stated above in connection with claim 1 and Office Action paragraph 3, it is requested the rejection be withdrawn.

The claim has the following limitations:

a. prior to printing by the claimed printer, the plurality of adhesive postal indicia are all free of any cryptographically signed information indicative of an identity of a purchaser of the postal indicia

b. the claimed printer prints cryptographically signed information indicative of an identity of a purchaser of the adhesive postal indicia upon the adhesive postal indicia.

The Examiner is invited to provide the page and line number where these limitations may be found, and failing this, the Examiner is requested to withdraw the rejection of claim 35 over these references.

Claim 36 has these limitations as well, so reconsideration is requested for the same reasons.

Office action paragraph 7. The Examiner is of the view that a combination of Ruat and US Pat. No. 5,717,597 to Kara ("Kara") supposedly renders obvious claims 5, 14 and 24.

It is noted that Kara was cited by applicant in paragraph 5 of the specification.

As admitted by the Examiner, the sole significance of Kara in these rejections is to show that a postal indicium can be an adhesive stamp. Otherwise the Examiner relies upon Ruat for these three rejections.

As for claim 5 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in connection with Ruat and claim 1.

As for claim 14 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in connection with Ruat and claim 10.

As for claim 24 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in connection with Ruat and claim 20.

Office action paragraph 8. The Examiner is of the view that a combination of Windel and Kara supposedly renders obvious claims 5, 14 and 24.

It is again noted that Kara was cited by applicant in paragraph 5 of the specification.

As admitted by the Examiner, the sole significance of Kara in these rejections is to show that a postal indicium can be an adhesive stamp. Otherwise the Examiner relies upon Windel for these three rejections.

As for claim 5 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in connection with Windel and claim 1.

As for claim 14 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in connection with Windel and claim 10.

As for claim 24 the Examiner is respectfully referred to the arguments presented above in

connection with Windel and claim 20.

Respectfully submitted,



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33. An adhesive postal indicium comprising information [:] indicative of a postage amount printed by a first process;

information indicative of a country printed by the first process; and

cryptographically signed information indicative of an identity of a purchaser of the adhesive postal indicium;

the cryptographically signed information printed by a different process than the first process.